

THE SOCIALIST PARTY of GREAT BRITAIN

Report of the Proceedings of the 68th Annual Conference

held at:

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C. 1. on Friday, Saturday and Sunday,
31st March, 1st and 2nd April, 1972

Attendances at Conference:

	<u>Delegates present</u>	<u>Branches represented</u>
<u>Friday</u> morning	35	16
afternoon	34	16
<u>Saturday</u>	33	16
<u>Sunday</u> morning	27	16
afternoon	35	16

Hackney Branch not represented throughout Conference.

Delegates from Merseyside Branch were allowed to sit without credentials by
Conference Resolution.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>
<u>Friday</u>	Collections £ 28.16	Hall Hire £110.00
	Collection Meeting 8.06 $\frac{1}{2}$	Gratuity 5.00
	Literature sales 5.71	Delegates Exs. 59.00
<u>Saturday</u>	Collection 9.35 $\frac{1}{2}$	Canteen purchases 21.85
	Literature sales 39	
<u>Sunday</u>	Collection 13.08	£195.85
	Literature sales 39	£139.94
Canteen	52.79	
	117.94	£ 55.91
Book Sales	22.00	
	£139.94	

Comrade J. Edmonds was elected chairman 12-nil.
Comrade E. Gay was elected Vice-chairman 11-nil

Standing Orders committee agreed to act as Tellers.

Item for Discussion, "Should E.C. members occupy the chair at Delegate
Camden Meetings and conferences?

Devereux, Camden, speaking for himself rather than the whole of the Branch - The annual review at conference is of the work of the E.C. and members whose work is being reviewed. Chairman should not be in a position to influence the debate. However much the chairman is under the control of conference the Party should be able to feel confident that the year's work is being discussed in a completely objective manner. E.C. members have the right to speak if their work is being discussed.

May, Westminster: We are opposed to this. E.C. members are not a race apart. This proposition savours of 'they' and 'us'. If a chairman appears to be unduly biased he can be voted out of the chair.

Item for Discussion, "Function of the E.C. Should they meet fortnightly,
Westminster delegation to sub-committees of routine work".

(taken in conjunction with Resolution from Haringey: "This conference instructs the E.C. to arrange its business so that it can normally meet fortnightly").

Bulck, Haringey. Rule 13 says that the E.C. shall meet at least once a fortnight so our resolution does not conflict with Party rules. There has been a problem recently to get members to stand for the E.C. possibly because they are required to turn up every week in the year. A fortnightly E.C. would help to solve this problem. There should be a definite instruction from conference to the E.C. to amend their Standing Orders which at present requires a weekly meeting, and the E.C. decision should be made before nominations for a new E.C. are sent out. A fortnightly meeting would be sufficient if less time were spent discussing policy matters which are no concern of the E.C. but of the Party and in discussing trivial routine matters. May, Westminster. For the three summer months the E.C. is experimenting with fortnightly meetings but we do not think you can instruct the E.C. to do this. There are too many items on the E.C. table which could be dealt with by a sub-committee but do we really want the E.C. merely to O.K. payment of bills, read the previous week's Minutes and deal with correspondence from Branches? The E.C.'s main role should be to initiate work in the Party. At the moment only one propaganda meeting is being arranged in Glasgow and one in Hyde Park. The E.C. should be more interested in this sort of activity. Mattingley, Mid. Herts. A fortnightly meeting would allow sub-committees to choose the alternative week to meet, and members of the E.C. would be free to sit on these sub-committees, making for better co-ordination.

Resolution LOST 12-32

Item for Discussion, "The need for a handbook to explain the Party administration
Glasgow and duties of officials to new members".

Vanni, Glasgow. It was a new member who moved this because he felt that the Rule Book did not fully provide what he wanted to know about the Party. I suggest a comprehensive booklet should be available along the lines of the old booklet which was issued in 1935 by Glasgow Branch which would immediately acquaint a new member of the workings of the Party. Westminster thought this a good idea in principle but it is not necessary to have a handbook.

EL. Resolution, Thomson & Knox, Glasgow: "That this conference recommends the E.C. to consider the need for a handbook for new members".

CARRIED overwhelmingly

Comrade Wood, Lewisham here stated that she thought that we concentrated too much on Items for Discussion rather than on the work of the Party during the year. Comrade Goodman, Westminster, inclined to agree but thought that in other years this has not really been any problem. The E.C. Report should take precedence but should not preclude Items for Discussion - it is usually Items for Discussion which are left over not dealt with.

Item for Discussion, "What constitutes a satisfactory examination of an
Westminster. applicant for membership?"

Westminster's main point was that a basic knowledge of economics, i.e. what is surplus value and where do profits come from should be considered of vital importance in deciding a new member's fitness to join the Party. Other members thought it was a mistake to be too ambitious and expect too much of a prospective member - we should be concerned not only with economics but with the member's general suitability to be a responsible member of the Party and to take part in the activities of the Party. New members should improve their knowledge by discussion in the Branch.

RESOLUTIONS

Merseyside "This conference proposes the name of the Party be changed to 'The World Socialist Party'.

Swansea Addendum: "Insert after the words 'The World Socialist Party' the words 'British Sector' in brackets".

Swansea Addendum: "Insert after the words 'The World Socialist Party' the words 'and that a poll of the Party be held if this decision is carried'".

There was little discussion on this resolution (which has come up several times at previous Delegate Meetings and conferences). The main point made here was that there are many groups now calling themselves 'socialist' and it would lessen confusion if we called ourselves 'The World Socialist Party'. It was also pointed out that another groups could use our name, which would only add confusion.

	Resolution LOST	14-31
Swansea first Addendum	LOST	8-38
" second "		Fell

Haringey "This conference instructs the E.C. to prepare and circulate a list of conference decisions and Party poll results for the period 1958-1972".

Porter, Haringey. This is self-explanatory. This work has been done for the years 1932-1958 and to continue it would be extremely useful to new members - it should be made available to all Branches.

This seemed to be the general opinion of the delegates and Haringey offered to help in compiling this information.

Resolution CARRIED 30-13

Merseyside: "This conference regrets that nothing has been done in regard to the National Sticker campaign which was proposed and passed at last year's Annual conference".

Edinburgh: "This conference deplors the attitude of the E.C. in not implementing the 1971 Annual conference resolutions, e.g. more money spent on the "S.S" and National Sticker campaign".

Merseyside thought the E.C. should have taken more steps in this matter. Lewisham: This was a floor recommendation only. When the E.C. put this matter before the Party only design for stickers was received, which would suggest that the Party as a whole is not interested. Baldwin, E.C. There was an extremely poor response by the Party and you cannot make a National sticker campaign if it is left only to Merseyside and Edinburgh. Although the Publicity committee was sympathetic to the idea it needed enthusiasm to do it in a responsible manner. There are dangers in this kind of activity and the rights of private property have to be considered.

A Manchester delegate interjected that we are revolutionaries, not responsible Party members and we should be able to put stickers wherever we can.

Merseyside Resolution	CARRIED 32-13
Edinburgh "	CARRIED 26-19

LITERATURE

Haringey "That this conference instructs the E.C. to publish or to finance the publication of, as a separate pamphlet, the German translation of Russia 1917-1967, perhaps under a different title, which appeared in the I.F.W".

Westminster Amendment: "Delete all from and including the word 'publish' and replace with 'enquire from our comrades in Austria and Germany as to the desirability of our publishing or financing the publication of - Russia 1917-1-67 in German in pamphlet form'".

Bulck, Haringey This publication was serialised two years ago in the I.F.W. and has already been translated into German, which is the main language used in central Europe. Most of the original research work has been done. As socialism becomes world wide we should have published our basic views on world capitalism including those on Russia. We would expect the E.C. to enquire of our Austrian comrades whether they would publish it over there or whether we should publish it here. Westminster wanted to know who would distribute it and thought that the Austrian comrades should be the final arbiters as to what they wanted printed, hence Westminster's amendment. They may prefer some other pamphlet. Swansea supported the amendment - do we know whether these comrades can distribute them? Bulck. It is true there are only a handful of our comrades in Austria and Germany but no wadays many people get an opportunity to travel abroad and there is Hyde Park where during the summer months there are visitors from other countries. There is shortly going to be another uprising in Eastern Germany. We could also get a list of Public Libraries in Austria and Germany where we could place our views on State capitalism in Russia.

Westminster Amendment CARRIED 29-12
As sub-Res. CARRIED 33- 9

Haringey: "This conference instructs the E.C. to consider publishing a further edition of William Morris' 'Art, Labour and Socialism' or some other similar work by Morris which would be valuable propaganda for socialism".

Lewisham, Amend. "Delete all after 'Art, Labour and Socialism'".

Westminster Amend. "Delete 'or perhaps some other similar work by Morris'".

The two amendments of Lewisham and Westminster which wanted the publication of 'Art, Labour and Socialism' only were both lost 20-25 and 18-27 respectively. The Item for Discussion by Birmingham - "Should the Party use its resources to produce the works of utopian Socialists (such as W. Morris) which are largely of historical interest"? - was discussed together with the above.

Smith, Birmingham. William Morris was a utopian socialist. 'Art, Labour & Socialism' is not valid in the 20th century and it is available in better editions than we could publish. We should keep our resources for other pamphlets. W. London agreed and would prefer a re-print of the Manifesto of the communist Party which is out of print. Redbridge. This is a classic work which has a lot to say regarding art and puts into proper perspective man's creative effort - also we have a very good write-up in the Introduction. Vanni, Glasgow disagreed that Morris was a utopian socialist. He may have made contradictory statements, so did Karl Marx and he is not utopian. In all essentials Morris was as much of a socialist as anyone here. The D. of P. of the S.P.G.B. is largely based on the D. of P. of the Socialist League and how can it be irrelevant if it sold out in such a short time? Morris had much to say about the nature of work in factories which is relevant today. Mid. Herts. were opposed to the resolution and both amendments. We should spend our money on our own pamphlets and leave other organisations to produce pamphlets of this type. Craig, Edinburgh. "Socialism & Religion" (now out of print) would be a more useful pamphlet. Redbridge, Swansea. We are opposed to all three on the ground that producing pamphlets at all is getting a bit out of date. We have difficulty in our Branch in selling them. Before you consider publishing a fresh edition or re-publishing old editions ask yourselves, can we distribute them? Holford, Brighton. We should use our resources specifically to improve the "S.S". Bulck, Haringey. 'Art, Labour & Socialism' is always a good seller but I personally think that it is not necessarily the best of William Morris from our point of view. Morris was a

Marxist - he could have got into Westminster Branch because he did know something about economics. We are not in favour of publishing this because it is of historical interest but because it is valuable propaganda for Socialism.

Resolution LOST 17-28

Swansea "Shall we continue the production of Pamphlets?"

Ambridge, Swansea, suggested we should have a look at the whole concept of publishing pamphlets. Have a look at the table here and at the stock of pamphlets at H.O. and ask yourselves, can we distribute them? The pamphlet idea is a bit out of date and goes back to the time when workers were semi-illiterate. We should go forward, not backward. S.W. London thought this idea was much too drastic. What should we produce? Just the "S.S"? Thomas, Westminster. As a socialist organisation we should have a basic library of pamphlets on the socialist case. Our Branch thinks that our pamphlets lack topicality. The Communist Manifesto and The Last Hundred Years is a pamphlet for convinced socialists. The 'War' pamphlet - is there any real interest in the history of war? Today war means war in Vietnam. Mid. Herts. Our pamphlet on Russia no longer carries the same point because many people today understand that Russia is a State capitalist country. They are now more interested in China. There are 10 or 12 articles in the "S.S" which would make a good pamphlet. Sinkins, Lewisham wanted to know why we have not got out a pamphlet on Ireland - it is needed urgently. Hardy, Pamphlets committee. With regard to having pamphlets in paper back form instead of stitched, conference has already decided this and the E.C. have this in mind next time we have a pamphlet ready for publication. The matter will be gone into thoroughly. Regarding the kind of pamphlets published, the Pamphlets committee does not operate on its own. Periodically we get comrades passing a resolution asking the E.C. to get out a pamphlet, or they draw up a list of half a dozen. It comes to the Pamphlets committee and what usually happens is that we get someone promising to do it and that is the last you hear of it. It is no use blaming members who take on this work and then find they cannot do it. Re 'Socialism and Religion', we have had about 20 resolutions asking for this to be revised and re-printed and we still have not been able to get it done. In connection with topicality, there is a difficulty here. We do need to say some basic things which cannot be covered adequately in a leaflet or short pamphlet. Re the 'War' pamphlet, this does not only deal with Russia, China etc. - remember that in the 'War' pamphlet we set out to show that the S.P.G.B. has an attitude to war which is unique, and you need background. You can, however, get out a leaflet on any topic. If you had a pamphlet now on Ireland, in 12 months it will very likely be as dead as a dodo. With short pamphlets you can get over part of the problem by bringing the subject up to date. But remember, whatever conference may decide, you have to get someone to do the job.

The chairman here ruled that Merseyside cannot withdraw its two resolutions on Rules 10 and 17.

Merseyside "This conference is of the opinion that another form of news material is needed in addition to the "S.S", i.e. a newspaper printed fortnightly".

Swansea, Amendment: "Delete the words 'addition to' in line 3 and insert the words 'place of' and delete the word 'newspaper' in line 3 and insert the words 'Socialist Journal'".

Edinburgh, Addendum: 'if printed on the Party's press'. (This was not taken seriously).

Ambridge, Swansea, No-one will object to the publication of a fortnightly journal. The "S.S" has served its purpose, doing a good job. It is the most important line of propaganda we have at the moment. But opportunities are lost to us because we have only a monthly journal and the printed word is probably the only realistic method left to us for propaganda. When I suggested at the Del. Meeting the possibility of a fortnightly journal we were met in most cases with 'it is not practical'. In my view it is an urgent necessity, not a luxury. The biggest drawback is ourselves. We have overcome greater difficulties in the past in publishing the "S.S" and if we make up our minds we could produce a fortnightly journal instead of the "S.S". Manchester. There are two types of propaganda - we need a theoretical Marxist journal dealing with theoretical analyses and another type of journal putting the socialist case, in an understandable way.

May, Westminster. We are opposed to the Swansea Amendment, and though we support the idea behind the resolution the Branch agreed to abstain. Ambridge spoke emotionally of our need for a more frequent journal. What is against a fortnightly "S.S" is the S.P.C.B. itself, its membership. At the moment we have a monthly journal which, for one reason or another, does not sell more than 4,500/5,000 copies. We should remember the Item for Discussion at the Del. Meeting. At that time a majority of the members were agreed that although in principle it was an extremely good thing we had to cut our coat accordingly. A resolution went forward asking the E.C. to look into the possibilities of producing an additional socialist journal, bi-monthly, during the three summer months when opportunities for circulation are better than in December, January and February. The E.C. passed it to the S.S.P.C. and the Central Organiser, myself. For a long time nothing was done. Obviously the S.S.P.C. has more on its plate than it can deal with and I have enough myself. I went into this question pretty thoroughly. I got up a mock edition of the "S.S.", with prices from the printer for 2,3,4 and 5,000 copies of news print. I put this to one member of the S.S.P.C. who thought I was being far too ambitious. I put it to the E.C. but collectively I do not think they used a scrap of imagination about the whole issue. The cost for three issues would be about £1,000. The E.C. discussed it for approx. 15 to 20 minutes and although some members of the E.C. were in favour nothing was done. It is now too late to do anything for this summer. The E.C. had an example before them which they could consider and perhaps go forward. But what arguments did they put up against it? - Who would write for it? Who will edit it? we cannot get nominations for the existing S.S.P.C. anyway. Therefore its not on. I think they went the wrong way about it and as long as conference and the Party are prepared to let the E.C. act in this way you will never get anything except a monthly journal. An editorial committee for a fortnightly journal could have been found if the E.C. had taken the trouble, but they let it slide. "We have not the resources to do it nor to circulate it". The whole thing needs more enthusiasm both from the E.C. and from the Party generally. It is practical, if not on a regular basis, at least for the summer months. I think there are a number of members who, if asked, would have been willing to form another Production Committee for three issues of an additional journal.

Wood, Lewisham. Some of the comrades at the 1945 Election would have turned in their graves if they knew what happened at the last Election. In those days Party members worked. Today, Tuesdays at H.O. are like a morgue. I travel to H.O. for three hours to get out the "S.S" to Branches, let alone sell copies to the public. It is no use saying we need a fortnightly "S.S" unless you are prepared to work for it and do it yourselves. It is not the E.C's fault - it is Branch members.

Vann, Glasgow. We must consider the real situation. Members at the last Del. Meeting voted for a pious resolution that we should try this. It is easy at conference to say it is a wonderful idea but the actual business of getting down to it is different. Comrade May spoke rather harshly about the E.C. objections but they are nevertheless very real. This can only be a practical possibility when you get too many nominations for the E.C., when you get a surfeit of material for publication in the "S.S". That will be the time for thinking in terms of another journal. Redbridge, opposed. We should be competing with other journals. We should bear in mind that we have something more important to say than to disseminate mere news. Devereux, Camden. In the "S.S" we try to provide continuous statements about the fundamental quality of the Party's case in relation to issues which crop up. I want to be sure before delegates commit themselves to supporting the idea of another paper that it will be of the same calibre and not deal with the mere trivia of the daily news and not be competing with other organisations who are providing this kind of thing. If it is only to be a comment on news which happens to be in the public eye at the time to keep up with the political journals of the time we should have nothing to do with it.

Night, Mid. Herts. Before Mid. Herts. would be in favour of a second journal we would have to see an increase in the sales of the "S.S". Do not kill the "S.S" by trying to distribute yet another journal. Baldwin, E.C. The "S.S" already runs at a loss every year. How long can we drain our resources away like this? The yard-stick of the matter as to when we are ready, willing and able to launch a fortnightly publication, which I would like to see, is when the "S.S" is selling 8,000 to 10,000 a month regularly so that we have resources in terms of money and writers.

Amendment	LOST	8 - 36
Resolution	LOST	14 - 20

Floor Resolution: Westminster. "That this Conference recommends the E.C. to
 May & Goodman. prepare a full report for submission to the 1972 Delegate
 Meeting for the production of an additional journal on a
 fortnightly basis during the summer months of 1973".

CARRIED 31-2

Overseas Contacts Secretary's Report. I would refer to the item in my report which says that an appeal has been made by the Group in Augsburg for financial assistance and for a German speaking contact for closer correspondence and help. There have been no money and no translations. Various letters have been exchanged between the E.C. and myself and the Comrades Weaver. There seems to have been considerable delay and misunderstanding in this matter and no help of any kind, and no explanation has been given to the comrades in Augsburg, since the matter was first raised in November last. I am not suggesting that they should be sent money but it is urgent that they receive help in the way of German translations. The Augsburg Group have now agreed to adopt the D. of P. of the S.P.G.B.

General Secretary. This Group is a small group in Augsburg, as far as we are concerned mainly made up of one individual who has a leaning towards the Party. On information from the Comrades Weaver they run two opposing journals. We have also been asked to send them financial assistance, but in the E.C.'s view, and taking the advice of the Overseas Contacts Secretary, it has been decided no money should be sent at this time. The Group has never at any time written officially to Head Office. We are now told for the first time that Manruf, one of the journals they publish, has adopted the D. of P. of the S.P.G.B. The Group should have informed us of this. This is the one publication which the Comrades Weaver have told us we should not be involved in and I am shocked that our D. of P. appears there. There may appear to have been delay in dealing with this matter but the fact remains that we have always been in touch.

Floor Resolution, Smith & McDonagh. "This Conference asks the E.C. to distribute to Branches all information relating to the Overseas Contacts Secretary's criticisms of their actions regarding the Group in Augsburg".

LOST 12-13

ITEM for DISCUSSION

Westminster: "Ways and means of making better use of the contents of the journals of the Companion Parties and methods of improving their circulation: also the necessity of ensuring that Companion Parties are always listed in all Party literature".

May, Westminster. We think it is essential that copies of the Overseas Parties' journals should be listed regularly in the "S.S.". Although I understand the S.S.P.C. do this as far as possible, there are many occasions when you would not know there are other journals being circulated by a world socialist movement. They should go in every time. We also do not help our Parties overseas by buying and selling sufficient copies of the 'Western Socialist', 'Fulcrum' etc. In every copy of the "S.S.", instead of having that little 2 X 2 square, we should have a joint circulation slip where all the journals of Companion Parties are listed. There should be a blank page at the back so that an article is not spoiled. It would be a good idea to re-print an article, perhaps from 'Fulcrum' or the 'W.S.' or the Jamaican journal, with acknowledgment.

The General Secretary here read a letter he had received from Comrade Russell, International Secretary, stating that he had already done some pioneering work along the lines suggested by Westminster, on the basis of mailing free Review copies of the "S.S.", 'W.S.', 'Fulcrum', the S.P. of N.Z. 'Viewpoint' and the Jamaican Review, to Belgium Germany, Israel, Singapore etc. paying all expenses himself. He supported Westminster's idea of having re-prints in the "S.S." of articles from Companion Parties' journals - it would help to give the "S.S." "an international flavour".

Ealing "The possibility of establishing an internal Party Journal, solely devoted to the development of Marxist theory".

Miller, Ealing read a very lengthy exposition of his four main points:

1. The vital importance of theory in the development of socialism.
2. Much of what the Party says relies on the development of theory.
3. That the Party has spent some time in developing theory in many fields.
4. That many areas are still in need of a great deal of development.

Sound theory means sound practice. Our present medium for this, the "S.S", is not suitable for the task. It seems to have two roles - firstly, the presentation of basic socialist propaganda to non-socialists and secondly, the development of theory. The "S.S" is not adequate to fill both these roles. We should have an internal Party journal entirely devoted to Marxist theory. Ealing Branch, however, does not want the resurrection of 'Forum' or any journal that could possibly degenerate as 'Forum' did.

There was considerable discussion on this item, various points being made both for and against an internal Party journal for Marxist theory.

Judd, Lewisham, did not agree that the "S.S" is not suitable for the expression of Marxist ideas. In the past we have had some very thorough articles on Marxist theory - it is up to members to write them. What is so mysterious about Marxist theory that it requires an internal Party journal? An inter-Party journal could lead to the confusion such as we have had in the past. May, Westminster. Nobody is opposed to the development of our ideas on the theories of Marxism. Where we disagree is on the best method of expressing them. The "S.S" cannot play a dual role. It can comment on every-day activities in the political world and the world in general, but I would say that the "S.S" is not the A.B.C. type of journal for people who know nothing about politics. It also has a role in developing Marxist theory. We could have a two-page article on Marxist theory but to have the "S.S" entirely devoted to this would kill it. We should resolve amongst ourselves what role the "S.S" should play in the future. Buick, Haringey. Against an inter-Party journal. We think the "S.S" should be used for propagating and developing socialist theory. What are the implications of this? The previous two speakers suggest that Marxism has already been developed and we have finished with it, but we understand the word 'developing' to mean something different - to involve discussion and conflict in different points of view rather than in propagating settled views.

Barlthrop, Edit. Committee, spoke at length of the publication of 'Forum' which at first had been fairly successful as a theoretical paper but became unpopular because of arguments between various members of the Party. It was finally closed down by the E.C. because it was using Party funds. The Party should have two papers, a propagandist paper and another in which weightier material could appear. He was against an inter-Party journal - "we should never have a paper that we do not wish our opponents to get hold of". Ambridge, Swansea. The period of 'Forum' was a most distressing one. You cannot learn all the ins and outs of Marxism theory by having an inter-Party journal. Do not use the term 'Marxist' too readily -

'socialist theory' is better, and this can best be learned through Branch discussion. Never again should we produce a journal that is not suitable for outsiders to read.

Baldwin, E.C. I welcome this debate. If the "S.S" were fulfilling its function this discussion need never have appeared on the Agenda. The "S.S" has always been able to function both as a propaganda and an educational journal. If today it endlessly comments on passing trivia the deficiency can be remedied. The "S.S" has suffered from the lack of any S.P.G.B. analyses of the Leninist and Trotskyist arguments and their contemporary organisations and groupings. What have the Tony Cliffs added to socialist theory? These sort of people end by voting for the Labour Party. Why keep our theory to ourselves? This is an introvert attitude. "Wage Labour & Capital" clearly demonstrates the opposing interests between capital and labour. Marx covers the whole spectrum of social interests.

During Comrade Young's contribution which followed Conference proceedings were unfortunately interrupted by a group of people coming in to distribute 'An Open Letter to the S.P.G.B.', written apparently by a group calling themselves "The Situationists". The Standing Orders Committee and other comrades did their best to hustle them out so that Conference could proceed smoothly. This was taken exception to by a few members and a resolution of protest was handed to the Chairman, Comrade Guy. It was then decided by a vote of 26-7 that this resolution be deferred till the

end of Conference. Later on the wording of the resolution was altered to read:

A. Johnston, Edinburgh. "That this Conference, whilst not condoning the action of
R. Miller, Ealing. the Situationists in disturbing proceedings, regret the
attitude of certain members who forcibly expelled members and
non-members from the Conference".

The Chairman, Comrade Edmonds, refused to accept this on the grounds that it was not
Conference business and because it was obvious that the majority of delegates were
against hearing it.

Hardy, E.C. suggested that some of the discussion shows too much interest in past
controversies. You can have too much of this sort of thing - it is all very well
for students. The world is flooded with the works of Marx. People like Tony Cliff
may do some useful work but it has not kept them on a straight line or done them any
good. Our object is to explain what is going on in the world today and we should use
Marx to explain them. We say that Marx of all the economists can best explain the
economy. We offer an explanation of inflation in which Marx is unsurpassed, but
our attitude is not that of Christ towards the bible. The S.P.G.B. is indebted to
Marx although we may have rejected some of his ideas. Do not overload the matter with
past controversies - you do not need to revive them. Marx wrote voluminous works,
but when he wanted to get to the workers he produced simple pamphlets such as
'Wage Labour & Capital'. It is not the job of the S.P.G.B. to overload our
literature with past controversies. We should understand the way things are and the
way they are moving and bring it down to the level for publication. This can be done
in the "S.S." or in a second journal, but I would hope it would not turn out to be
involved with out-dated enquiries into past events with results that do not justify
the effort, i.e. the Left-Wingers etc.

P. Lawrence, Lewisham. I have long thought that arguments with present-day Left-
Wingers and emphasis on past history add little to our propaganda efforts. We should
beware of the view that the last word has been said on capitalism and that there is
no need for controversy and discussion. In fact we have barely applied Marxian
theory to the nature of modern capitalism. There is scope for discussion in
applying Marxian theory on the development of the productive forces in general, the
way in which capital accumulates, the diversification of labour etc. Ealing: My
emphasis was intended to be on theory, not on internal, socialist theory or Marxist
theory - it is the same thing. What is needed is a Marxist theoretical journal.
A good editorial committee could prevent it from deteriorating in the way that
Forum did.

AMENDMENTS to RULE These were all lost with the exemption of Westminster's
amendment to Rule 22 which was CARRIED 29-17. The Rule now stands as follows:-

"Each Branch shall be entitled to send two delegates for the first 20
members and one additional delegate for every further 10 members. Delegates
to Branches formed within the previous six months shall sit and vote only
with the consent of the Conference. Where Branches are unable to send their
full number of delegates the votes of their delegates upon all questions
where definite instructions have been given (signed by the Branch Secretary
and Chairman) shall count according to the representation to which the
Branches are entitled".

<u>RULE 2</u>	Merseyside	"Delete Rule 2 entirely".	<u>LOST 7-35</u>
	Camden Amend.	"That the words 'Each member shall pay 5p (1s.0) per week' be deleted and replaced by 'Each member shall pay 5p. per calendar month'"	<u>LOST 22-23</u>
	Swansea <u>Edinburgh</u>	"Delete '5p (1s.0)' in the first line and replace with '10p'.	<u>LOST 10-34</u>
	Glasgow	"Delete from the word 'funds' on the second line to the word 'The' on the third line"	<u>LOST 20-23</u>

- RULE 3 Merseyside "Delete the last sentence" LOST 19-25
- Edinburgh Amend. "and replace with 'A member taking up residence abroad can only remain a member if there is no Companion Party in that country'" LOST 19-24
- RULE 5 Birmingham "That Rule 5 be addended 'nor shall he belong to any religious organisation, or write or speak for any religious organisation except in opposition'" LOST 18-24
- RULE 9 Merseyside "Delete Rule 9 entirely" LOST as under Rule 2
- Glasgow Amend. "Delete 'purchase dues stamps from H.O. at the rate of 4p (9d)' and insert 'pay H.O.4p'" LOST 20-25
- Camden "That the words '4p (9d) per week' be deleted and replaced by '20p per calendar month'" FELL
- Edinburgh "Delete '20p per calendar month' - replace with '5p per week'" FELL
- RULE 10 Merseyside "Delete Rule 10 entirely" - Withdrawn by vote Cd. 19-10
- Swansea "Add at the end of Rule 10 'and leaflets expressing Party policy'." LOST 20-26
- RULE 16 Westminster "Delete Rule 16 entirely" LOST 12-23
- RULE 17 Merseyside "Delete from the first sentence 'publish and control the Party literature'" LOST 7-28
- Swansea "Insert in line two after the words 'Party literature' the words 'that is any journal, pamphlet or leaflet in the name of the Party nationally' and delete in line six after the words 'Socialist Parties abroad' the words 'and otherwise generally supervise the work of the Party'" LOST 12-34

There was little discussion on the above. Ambridge pointed out that this year we have 17 Amendments to Rule and only one has been carried. This 'one' constitutes a record! Most years we have carried none, each year going through the same lengthy performance of voting. Branches should give more thought to this matter in future years. We should ask ourselves, do we really need to try and amend the rules each year. I suggest that if a rule has been workable for about 10 years, five years would be long enough before we try to amend it.

RESOLUTIONS RELATED TO RULES:

- Merseyside "That Rule numbers be corrected consecutively if any of the amendments to Rules 2, 9 and 10 in the name of Merseyside Branch is passed" FELL
- Camden "That any amendments to Rules 2 and 9 concerning the payment of dues shall take effect as from 1st January 1973" FELL
- Westminster Amend. "Delete 1973 and replace with 1972" FELL
- S.W. London "That this Conference calls on the E.C. to hold a Party Poll proposing to delete the words 'or deposit' from Rule 15" LOST 3-42
- Swansea Amend. "Delete the word 'calls' and insert the word 'instructs' after the word 'Conference'" FELL

Item for Discussion: Westminster: "Does the Party make the best use of the money allocated for publicity?"

Westminster. Publicity has two purposes - one, to make the Party known, and two, to advertise Party literature. More imagination should be used. Instead of the advert. 'One World' there should have been something on the Common Market. There is not enough initiative taken by the Publicity Committee and the E.C. in pushing Branches into propaganda drives.

Resolution: "The E.C. shall not spend more than £100 on H.O. without (1) fully reporting to a conference or delegate meeting or a special Party meeting (2) getting the approval of a conference or delegate meeting or Party poll for the expenditure".

Quick, Haringey. At the Delegate Meeting we heard that the E.C. was going to spend £1,000 on H.O. premises and we were appalled. This shows a wrong sense of priorities. We thought it should have been spent on Party propaganda, leaflets, pamphlets and Elections. The Premises Committee had this in mind before the Del. Meeting last year but it was not until the Del. Meeting was over that it was put before the E.C. We think £100 is a reasonable figure to spend on repairing and maintaining Head Office without having to get permission from Conference. Ambridge, Swansea. Opposed the resolution on the ground that, although they were opposed to spending £1,000, it was ridiculous to go from one extreme to the other. £100 today would only buy a couple of gallons of paint. You should trust the Premises Committee and the E.C. E. Critchfield, Ealing. Disagreed that the E.C. gives preference to H.O. premises as soon as they have money to spend. Redbridge. £100 is much too meagre a sum. Mid. Herts, against the resolution - it is not realistic to tie the E.C. down too tightly.

Gen. Secretary. We should get this matter into perspective. The idea behind the recommendation of the Premises Committee to the E.C. was not necessarily to spend £1,000. They were concerned with the care and maintenance of old premises. We are now forced to spend £300 or £400, and the Party should realise that we are not the final arbiters in how we spend our money on premises. We have to go to the Local Authority for clearance, and remember we did ask for Branches' views. Now we are relying on the generosity of Party members who happen to be builders, painters etc. We have carried out two sets of roof repairs, the painting of the premises has been completed, there have been sanitary improvements, the re-wiring of the whole building and many other minor improvements have been done without cost to the Party. We are now under the eye of the Local Authority and there are many complications. Our front door with its glass panels does not conform with basic regulations. The Saturday evening meetings at H.O. have interfered with our programme of re-development. The expenditure will be kept down to a minimum of £300 or £400. Edinburgh supported Haringey's resolution.

LOST 12-29

Resolution: "This Conference feels that the format of the "S.S" is too formal and should be made more attractive, i.e. the use of more colour, cartoons, photographs, shorter articles and larger print".

Edinburgh's Amendment to the above to 'instruct' was LOST 7-42

Merseyside. The resolution explains itself. The "S.S" at present is of little interest to the ordinary man in the street. Knox, Edinburgh, in support. We are too complacent as to what goes in the "S.S", sticking to what has gone in in the past. The content is decreasing. We do not like book reviews. There should be more colour, something to brighten the whole thing up. Most of the objections to the "S.S" come from the younger members of the Party. We need a fresh look at the "S.S".

Judd, Lewisham. I do not object to a fresh look at the "S.S" at any time but what are we going to do with it? What is the purpose of the "S.S"? It is to put forward socialist propaganda and there are not many ways of doing this. The most effective way is to explain and analyse the socialist case. This cannot be done by more colour and pictures, or by turning the "S.S" into a jolt and jiff cartoon. I object strongly to the statement that the "S.S" is of little interest, it is

unique. I challenge Merseyside to say where you can find the same attitude and approach as in the "S.S.". Who do you mean by the man in the street? Colours and cartoons will not make people think. Weidberg, Westminster was in favour of the resolution but opposed to the amendment. More colour and cartoons would help us to reach a wider audience. We need more imaginative articles.

R. Critchfield, Edit. Committee: I have a certain amount of sympathy with some of the ideas expressed by Merseyside and feel that the "S.S." should do something towards meeting this sort of attitude, without supporting in any way the resolution of Merseyside. We welcome criticism. You will see from our report that two of the Editorial members feel they have been on the Committee too long - there should be new members and fresh approaches. A constructive move here would be for other members to prepare themselves to work on the Committee. We have now lost one of our Editorial members but what sort of response do we get for nominations to fill those vacancies? The ones we have are still what we would describe as 'old' members. Re the resolution, we can use more colour, but as regards cartoons, they have to be drawn and there is no one in the Party who can compose cartoons of a high standard, and bearing in mind the size of the "S.S.", they have to be of a particular size. Something can be done, of course, in regard to photographs, but they have to be found, where the copyright is held, and they cause an enormous amount of work - they don't pop out of the blue. We are continually asking members to let us have photographs but the result is nothing. Regarding larger print, the comrade who lays out the "S.S." thinks that the present print is the best size. We are not complacent about the "S.S." but many members are quite happy with the "S.S." as it is done today. Each issue contains about 15,000 to 20,000 words.

Vanni, Glasgow, opposing both the resolution and the amendment, we are in favour of the "S.S." being more attractive and we do not mind more colour in certain circumstances. The "S.S." has been criticised throughout its history. It seems that the "S.S." has lost its tradition of an argumentative case. The idea that the "S.S." is of little interest to the ordinary man boils down to the fact that we are not making enough progress. Members may think it is due to the way the "S.S." is laid out but it is due to the gap between ourselves and the ordinary man in the street. The vast majority of people who buy it are not in agreement. What some members seem to want is something like Red Mole, but what is the point? What do pictures and cartoons imply to the ordinary reader? I am not convinced that photographs are all that important. How do these things emphasize what we are trying to get across? Not at all, and how can you argue a theoretical case in a shorter article? Perhaps we need two distinct journals, one for propaganda and one for theory. We have to appeal to a cross section of society and we must get as much material in the "S.S." as we can. Photographs are frivolous.

Resolution CARRIED 24-20

Resolution: Merseyside:

"This Conference feels steps should be taken for the "S.S." to be distributed through the wholesale newspaper trade"

Edinburgh's Amendment to 'instruct' on the above was LOST 18-27.

Merseyside. We are losing money on the "S.S.". What we need is a mass sale. Members do not seem to be able to distribute it satisfactorily. Anbridge, Glasgow. Members should find out what steps have been taken to do this in the past and to get some knowledge of newsagents. This is not the first time we have been asked to investigate this question. It has been very well investigated. Wholesalers have turned it down as they do not get enough out of it and they are not interested in the kind of journal we publish. Members of the Party have got to do the work - there is no short cut. Max, Westminster, supporting Merseyside. Because it has been turned down in the past there is no reason why we should not try again. The newspaper trade will not make a fortune out of the "S.S." but there are newsagents who are prepared to sell the "S.S." and they have come through the hard work of members. If every Branch could get half a dozen newsagents in their area to sell only ten "S.S." it would help - why not try? Garnham, Cent. Lit. Sales Dept. Comrade Anbridge is wrong when he says that wholesalers have turned us down. Two firms have been willing. They offered to distribute for a period of six months for a trial period. They wanted £100 to distribute in Central London or in the main Provincial cities and they also wanted 30% discount, and recommended an increase in

the price of the "S.S". Today the cost would probably be about one-third more. Dale, Mid.Herts. We decided to support this in principle just for another try but personally I have little hope of success. The whole trend today is to cut out things that do not sell well, like the "S.S". You can do quite a bit on a local level. Buick, Haringey, in support. It was the E.C. last time who turned this project down through want of imagination and spending £510. The Publicity Committee at that time approached distributors and got their agreement to distribute at a particular price. It could be linked with an advertisement campaign in the particular part of London where it was being distributed. The E.C. did not seriously try it. This is the sort of thing we should not be afraid to spend money on.

Resolution CARRIED 27-19

Merseyside: "This Conference thinks it would be a good idea if a cut out name and address insertion be included in our literature to be sent by enquirers to Head Office".

Edinburgh Amend:

"Delete the words 'This Conference thinks it would be a good idea if' and replace them with the words 'That this Conference instructs the E.C. that'" .

Birmingham Added: "and that the subscription form at present displayed in the "S.S" be amended to read 'post and package included'".

May, Westminster, supported both the Amendment and the Resolution. Instead of the present subscription form why not include all the journals published by our fraternal parties overseas and our pamphlets? Have it right across the page, leave the back blank and make it look more attractive. Birmingham suggested, instead of leaving it blank on the back page, put our H.O. address.

Amendment	CARRIED	23-18
Resolution as added	-	CARRIED 25-14
As sub-Resolution	CARRIED	25-14

Birmingham: "That the present system of dating the Standard be discontinued, being replaced by the year and a volume number".

There was little discussion on this - LOST 13-31

Birmingham: "That a larger print type be used for the "S.S"".
This was considered already dealt with -

LOST 3-40

Birmingham: "That a glossary of terms used be included in the "S.S"".

Little discussion - LOST 13-32

Birmingham: "That a section of the "S.S" be given to an appeal to readers for information they think might aid the S.P.C.P".

May, Westminster, in support. We should try and engage the readers more fully in our journal. The "S.S" circulates over a wide area, including abroad. Perhaps we could have half a page three times a year of interesting news items from newspapers and journals sent in by readers of the "S.S" - they might have a good point to make about capitalism (assuming this is what the resolution is concerned with).

LOST 13-33

Haringey: "That the Party should contest at least one seat in every General Election, funds permitting".

S.W.London Amend: "Delete 'at least one seat in'". (no opening up by S.W.London)

Buick, Haringey. In spite of the Parliamentary Committee's adverse report on the 1950 Election campaign, we still regard it as a success on the ground that we scored elections basically as a token stand to show that we are challenging the existing capitalist parties and that we believe in using the ballot box in order to change society. It is good propaganda, both local and national. As well as the E.C. down to contesting at least one seat.

Mass, Swansea, in support. We cannot afford to contest too many elections - they cost too much and dissipate Party members' energies. Local elections are easy to contest, they cost little and get socialist ideas across to a fair number of people. In a General Election the Party gets a wider covering in the Press.

Vanni, Glasgow. Glasgow Branch is evenly divided on this (6-6 in support). I give my own view-point. The Parliamentary Report on the 1970 Election confirms what I and other members of the Party have been saying for a long time. The response from members was extremely poor - all we managed to do in Hornsey and Clapham was to get the Manifesto delivered. There was no canvassing, almost no literature-selling, and only 7 or 8 members in attendance out of all the London members. This is a far cry from the palmy days of 1945 at Paddington or even 1966, which I understand was an exhilarating experience. Where has the enthusiasm gone? The truth is that members have realised that it is all just a mighty gesture. All we have discovered, and it has already cost us a lot of money, is what we already knew, that the working class are as yet nowhere near our level of consciousness. We find this out at indoor and outdoor meetings. At this stage in the game contesting elections is futile. I am no anti-parliamentarian - one day it will be worth while. Until then it is a waste of time, money and energy, and we lose enthusiasm. In 1970 there was almost no coverage from the local Press and some of it was half-baked and even incorrect.

Baldwin, Parliamentary Cttee: I repudiate almost everything Comrade Vanni has said and his whole attitude. If anyone has lost enthusiasm it is Glasgow who have apparently got their fingers burnt. In Clapham we still have the enthusiasm to do it again. We are a political party, and whether or not the capitalist Press gives us publicity we still have to fight in the political arena. Glasgow say it is premature. When is it going to be the time? The "S.S" loses us money every year but we don't pack this up as well. Let us recognise that our resources are limited in personnel and finance but take ourselves seriously as a political party. We should have Press Officers to see there is no scrambling in the capitalist Press. At Election times political involvement is high, have the courage to put forward the alternative to the present system and regard elections as part of the general activities of the S.P.G.B. as a political party.

D'Arcy, Camden. We are not opposed to the Party contesting elections but we think that when you set out to do this don't put it on the agenda as an article of faith, as some kind of religious thing you must do in all circumstances. This is the wrong approach. The Party can always judge a situation. We might have better resources at some times than at others. Since 1945 there has been a lack of enthusiasm among some members to carry out this kind of work and one of the contributory factors has been that the Rule Book has been altered so that we now allow other people to sign the Nomination Paper instead of Party members. In the last election we contested there were no meetings, no literature sales and no canvassing - it was not the S.P.G.B. contesting at all, it was a non-event with derisory results. Camden Branch take the view that we must always be prepared to assess conditions as we find them and take political action when we think fit. West London were opposed.

May, Westminster, in support. When are we going to take ourselves seriously? What is a successful campaign? In my view it is not just writing out 20,000 envelopes - any commercial office can do that for you. A successful Election campaign consists of that work which only members of the S.P.G.B. can do, and last time we did not do it. In 1945 there were a dozen members out every night. The last Election cost us £700. I am in favour of electoral activity but the Party has made mistakes and one was in contesting Hackney. The chap who held the seat in Hackney had a tremendous majority and he was not even given Press coverage. If you want to contest elections you must be prepared to take part even at a minimum of only one in five years.

Knox, Birmingham. We should contest an election when the time is suitable and when we can get the best return for the outlay. Mid.Herts, against the resolution on the grounds that the E.C. should not be tied. The E.C. already has power to arrange for the contesting of an election at any time. Smith, Birmingham. We cannot avoid contesting elections - it is in the Declaration of Principles.

Lawrence, Camden. We all know we are going to contest elections eventually: all we are concerned with is the best time to contest. Camden Branch would like it understood that if we vote against this proposition it is because the E.C. can at the moment decide to contest any election - leave the decision in the hands of the E.C.

Ambridge, Swansea, abstaining. We seem to have become desperate - we must contest come what may, Your desperation and disillusionment arise from the fact that you go into these elections almost blind and members expect far more than was ever possible. The E.C. as part of the Party is committed to electoral activity. Look at the situation realistically. If you want to be a political party you must accept the consequences.

S.W. London Amendment LOST 10-27

Haringey Resolution CARRIED 23-22

POLICY

(taken in conjunction with K. and L. of Agenda on Trade Unions):

Camden

"That this Conference affirms that the Socialist Party of Great Britain has as its sole object the establishment of Socialism. It is a revolutionary Party based on the class struggle. All reforms are put into operation on behalf of one section or another of the capitalists in their own interests, even though some may contain incidental advantages to the workers. The Socialist Party of Great Britain is opposed to the workers wasting and energy in attempting to improve capitalism by means of reforms, thus obscuring the class struggle. Consequently, the Party cannot support any action aimed at gaining or maintaining a reform as such support would not only confuse the workers but it would overlook the fact that the Party's sole object is the establishment of Socialism. We must therefore confine ourselves directly to the furtherance of that object and not take any steps up the blind alley of reformism.

This statement deals with reforms, not with the Party's attitude to the struggle of the workers on the industrial field".

Mid. Herts. Amend.

"Delete 3rd sentence. Delete 2nd paragraph.

W. London "

"Delete the last paragraph".

Swansea Amend.

"Delete after the words 'Consequently the Party cannot' the word 'support' and insert the word 'advocate' and delete after the words 'maintaining a reform as such' the word 'support' and insert the word 'action'".

Westminster Amend.

"Delete 'class struggle' on line 11 and replace with 'true nature of the class struggle and Socialism and being, in fact, a rejection of the Socialist solution'".

Hardy. There are two kinds of things we say about Trade Unions - one deals with their actions, their organisation concerning strikes etc, which is all we are concerned with here. We approach this from a limited point of view. In the Party's first Manifesto published shortly after its formation there was a passage about Trade Unions. It contained a form of words which was endorsed by Conference in a pamphlet and generally circulated and re-affirmed as recently as Conference, 1971. We are in agreement with working class action on the industrial field when based on a clear recognition of the workers' position in Society and the class struggle necessarily resulting therefrom. What Camden Branch is saying is that the Party years ago tried to give that original formula some practical implication to strikes etc. from day to day. But more recently there has been a less critical attitude towards Trade Union organisation and strikes. Industrial organisation and action, including the proper use of the strike weapon, has the support of the S.P.C.B. But if we say that workers ought to support a strike, to other organisations it means something different - it could mean that we were prepared to support the strike with money and take active steps. We do not contribute towards strikes nor call on members to come out on strike irrespective of others. This is a minor point but it can lead to misunderstanding. What I say about the miners is applicable to others. They came out on strike and formulated their strike claim in terms of a 'special case'. They were not prepared to co-operate and have a joint claim with other nationalised industries. All Trade Unions fight for their own members, not for the benefit of the working class. The Party in the past has criticised the closed shop which ended up in a pact between the Trade Union executives and the employers to keep other people out. We have the sad spectacle of Trade Unions fighting the same battle over and over again. We think the Party might consider we were being more useful when we try to remind them not only of

their 1.
method
had
I
b

their limitations but what the Party considers the gross errors they make in the methods they are using. We should get back to our attitude of years ago when we had a more critical and useful attitude. McClatchie, Camden, speaking for himself. I contend that the Party should have nothing to do with Trade Unions. Trade Unions have changed over the years for the worst. You should remember the difference between our organisation and that of Trade Unions where each is organised for the benefit of its own members and are prepared to fight each other. We should not become involved in this sort of argument, and we do not always have adequate information.

Vanni, Glasgow, asked for an example of our uncritical support, and D'Arcy quoted from the "S.S" which gave uncritical support to the postal workers. We stated that we were supporting them and that we should give them funds. We are becoming too pre-occupied with this sort of thing - it is a dead end. We are on the side of the workers and it is time the Trade Unions gave us some support. K. Knight, Mid. Herts. The significant thing has been said by McClatchie in the sense that he points out that Trade Unions have been dividing the workers. The control of them is now in the hands of a bureaucracy. In the U.S. Trade Union leaders have accepted wholesale redundancies on the part of their members to get better pay for the others. Our attitude towards individual strikes should not be one of uncritical support. An Ealing delegate quoted from the "S.S" to the effect that we had not been uncritical with regard to the miners' strike.

Birmingham: Is there too much of a distinction made between 'industrial' and political' action?

McDonagh, Birmingham. There is no great distinction. Smith, Birmingham. In the "S.S" we see a number of allusions to the distinction between industrial action and political action. I do not think the distinction is made clear enough. Defending wages is a political action but a different type of political action than the one we take for the attainment of socialism. Workers fighting to improve their wages is in itself a political action. Moss, Swansea. The Party makes a clear distinction between industrial and political action. The former is about the division of surplus value. Political action is not. In this country the difference is becoming less distinct. In Italy you find that strikes do not take place merely on the division of surplus value but on reforms for better housing, a health service etc. If a Socialist Party was formed there could they make this distinction? I think not. The whole idea of 'distinction' should be more closely reviewed.

Lawrence, Camden, winding up for Camden's resolution on reforms. Over the years this is an issue which has been debated at various times. We simply wanted to have a simple statement which combined the whole historical outlook of the Party on the subject with the situation as it is now so that we have a statement in 1972 without having to refer back to past years. Edwards, W. London. We agree with McClatchie and Swansea. The actions of Trade Unions in pressing for higher wages etc. are no less a reform than the ones the Labour Party is putting forward - school meals etc. The Party's attitude to Trade Unions generally should be one of opposition.

Moss, Swansea, agrees with Camden's statement as such but regarding Swansea's amendment, he thought that 'advocate' expresses more precisely what the Party's attitude is. In certain circumstances the Party could support a reform. In the first World War the capitalist class sought to remove from C.O's their voting rights. The Party could support a move for the votes to be restored. The French capitalist class saw fit to declare illegal certain political groups as a danger to security. In these circumstances I presume the Party would support moves to restore the right of assembly to all political groups. We would support a move for free transport.

Thomas, Westminster: We put this down to clarify Camden's statement with which we are in general agreement. The class struggle is not obscured - most people will concede what there is a class struggle but reforms obscure what the class struggle is about. Kerr, Redbridge: What is the difference between advocate and support? Advocating is the same as supporting. Lewisham wanted the third paragraph left in - Industrial action is quite different from political action and were in support of the Camden resolution as it stands. Judd, Lewisham. We should stress the futility of all reforms. A socialist is not concerned with crumbs. The idea that political reforms and the struggle of the workers in the industrial field are one and the same is a dangerous notion - we have always made a distinction between them.

K. Knight, Mid.Herts. We will support the resolution if it is accepted with our amendment, but consider the third sentence is too sweeping. It is time we gave up the idea that the industrial field is unique. Industrial action is reform action. Sentence three is inaccurate. There are many reforms which are not in the interest of the capitalist class directly or a section of them. Ealing. If the workers in Russia wanted more democracy we should have to support them. Hardy. All this discussion shows the need to look at this question properly. A lot of members do not know what the Party's present position is. It is embodied in various documents confirmed in 1971. No statement adopted by Conference or Party poll has ever authorised the Party to advocate or support any reform with the sole exception of the Member of Parliament. There was some controversy in the Party in 1911 over what a socialist M.P. would do in the House of Commons. A document adopted by a Party poll stated that if there is a Bill in its detailed form in the House of Commons which might contain something of benefit to the working class the Party would tell the M.P. to vote either for or against it, or abstain, as dictated by the advancement of our Object, i.e. would it benefit the whole socialist movement, the whole of the working class? The Party has never been committed to support anything in the House of Commons except in the light of our Object. Holford, Brighton. suggested that it was inconsistent for an S.P.G.B. candidate on the eve of an Election to oppose reforms and then, in Parliament, to consider them on their merits. Peter Lawrence considered the resolution totally inadequate - not sufficiently comprehensive. It attempts to put all reforms into one basket and would commit us to an attitude of opposition to all reforms. We should be a sectarian Party withdrawn from the world in which we live. Capitalism adjusts itself from one situation to another. Political reforms are legislated over the whole social and economic field and concern themselves with a wide range of subject-matter, some more important than others. We should consider all reforms as they relate to socialism. Some are straight forward, i.e. an attempt by the Government to limit the effectiveness of Trade Unions in general by restricting picketing. The best thing we can do is to put them in their social perspective as they reflect a change in moral attitudes which in the long run can be helpful in the establishment of socialism. Weigh them up on their merits. The surest way to achieve the objects the reformists say they want is to support a socialist movement. Ambridge, Swansea. The resolution is contrary to what the Party has already agreed to. We do not advocate reforms but always remember that there are some reforms that might still benefit some hard-up members of the working class.

Mid.Herts. Amendment	LOST	8-37
W.London "	"	5-40
Swansea "	"	10-33
Westminster "	"	18-26
Camden Resolution	CARRIED	30-16

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

There was no time left in which to consider this. The General Secretary promised that a financial statement will be sent to all Branches as soon as a report is received from the new Auditor and the Treasurer.

The E.C.'s Report to Conference was adopted and agreed.

All Items on the Agenda were dealt with.